Promotional

A Newsletter for Supporters of Concordia University

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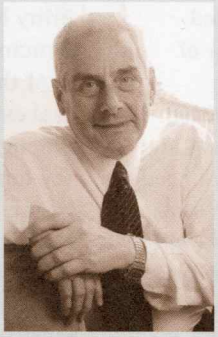
The Gift

Christian Fleury

Eric and Jane Molson with Frederick Lowy at the President's Circle Reception held at the Richard. J. Renaud Science Complex, May 30, 2005.



It's my pleasure to welcome you to The Gift, *a newsletter intended to inform supporters of Concordia of events, issues and accomplishments related to philanthropy and volunteerism.*

Your gifts are vitally important to us and help the university fulfill its academic mission, create scholarships and bursaries, support research and help build and maintain our quality of education.

I hope that you, our donors, find this newsletter both informative and entertaining. For more information on donating to Concordia, contact the Office of University Advancement & Alumni Relations, (514) 848-2424 ext. 4856, alumni@alcor.concordia.ca.

Sincerely,
Claude Lajeunesse
President & Vice-Chancellor, Concordia University

Endowed for Excellence

Concordia friends show their appreciation for past president Frederick Lowy's achievements at the university

By Frank Kuin

Donors to Concordia have responded with great enthusiasm to the idea of honouring Frederick Lowy, the university's president for the past 10 years, with a lasting endowment for fellowships.

Under the leadership of Richard Renaud, L BComm 69, Dominic d'Alessandro, L BSc 67, LLD 98, Jonathan Wener, S BComm 71, and the university's fundraising team, in less than six months, $3 million was raised for the endowment, a permanent fund named after Dr. Lowy that will generate 10 fellowships annually worth $15,000 each and be offered in perpetuity. The fellowships will be certain to attract first-rate graduate students to Concordia, an objective that always ranked high on Dr. Lowy's agenda. The recipients will be known as Frederick H. Lowy Scholars.

"The response was absolutely overwhelming," says Jonathan Wener, co-chair of the fundraising campaign. "The fact that we met our target in a

Concordia UNIVERSITY

Real education for the real world

few months speaks for itself. People were eager to show their appreciation for Dr. Lowy's tremendous contribution to the growth and advancement of the university."

The Frederick H. Lowy Scholars endowment was formally unveiled in May at a farewell dinner in Montreal honouring Dr. Lowy. The announcement capped a soirée of tributes to the popular president, attended by friends and family.

"People were thrilled with Dr. Lowy's performance, and they were all sad to lose him," says Wener. "It's a marvellous salute, the best gift that we could give him for his departure."

A fellowship endowment is consistent with the parting president's conviction that Concordia must attract and retain top graduate students to be among Canada's leading academic institutions. During Dr. Lowy's tenure, the university dramatically increased its research profile, added more than 400 professors and opened the Richard J. Renaud Science Complex, boosting Concordia's position in scientific research. "The endowment is in keeping with our desire to increase our graduate programs and the research that's taking place at the university," says Wener.

Eric Molson, Concordia's chancellor and honorary chair of the fundraising committee, agrees that the endowment is a fitting salute to Dr. Lowy. "During his tenure there has been a great upsurge in the research part of our institution," he says. "Dr. Lowy is the ideal person to have this fund named after."

Moreover, it will be a lasting monument to a president who oversaw great progress at the university, he adds. "It's an endowment, so the fellowships will go on forever. It's a leap forward for the university to have this. Dr. Lowy is a wonderful person and there was no hesitation on the part of donors to come forward with generous donations."

Details of how the fellowships will be allocated are still being finalized, says Associate Director of Major Gifts Debbie Dankoff. Candidates will be considered based on academic standing, reflecting Concordia's continuing desire to attract top graduate students while helping them meet their financial needs.

The Frederick H. Lowy Scholars endowment, says Wener, "ensures that his contribution to Concordia will be remembered for the remainder of the institution's life."

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A Civic Mind

The late John Sancton, a leader in the community newspaper industry in Canada during its heyday, is commemorated through an award in journalism at Concordia

By Debbie Hum

A fire that destroyed the main building of his Quebec Eastern Townships boarding school proved to be a defining moment in the life of John William Sancton: aged 17, he quickly filed what became a front-page story in Montreal's *Gazette* and seized the chance to end his formal schooling in favour of bona fide work at the *Sherbrooke Daily Record.*

Journalism, through a lens of community and civic-mindedness, would become Sancton's life's work and passion, interrupted only by five years' military service during the Second World War. He returned with an English war bride, Mary Bain, and landed a job as city editor and then assistant news editor at the *Gazette.*

"Early on, he was charged with writing the obituaries, which he thought would be unpleasant," relates his son, Ted Sancton. "But he discovered that people were eager to share their stories. He learned that telling the stories of people was key, and he carried this perspective throughout his career."

In 1948, at age 29, John Sancton bought Quebec's oldest community newspaper, the *Stanstead Journal.* Over the next three decades, Sancton would head several community newspapers in the Montreal region: the *Monitor, Verdun Guardian, St. Laurent News, Town of Mount Royal Weekly Post* and *Westmount Examiner.* "He was always very aware of the responsibility he had as editor of the community newspaper," Sancton says.

At the *Westmount Examiner,* he introduced a log of real estate transfers, which was a very popular feature among readers, but not necessarily when they were the homeowners or buyers. Sancton explains, "His belief, though, was that things had to be done in public so that people could know what was going on in their community and be engaged."

In an era when community newspapers wielded considerable influence, John Sancton was also instrumental in making Westmount City Hall more democratic, helping end backroom and rubber-stamp decision-

making and opening the process up to the public.

For close to 40 years, he was also active in the Rotary Club of Westmount, serving as its president in 1977-78. During his tenure, the club built the Manoir Westmount seniors' residence. "Faced with considerable opposition to building the residence at Westmount Park, a 'not-in-my-backyard' sort of attitude, John wrote a rebuttal in the newspaper and delivered it to all the residents," recalls Jim Griffin, past president of the Rotary Club. "The proposal passed by five votes."

In his final years, Sancton lived very happily at the manoir with his wife, Griffin says. When Sancton died last December, the Rotary Club established a journalism award in his memory at Concordia University. "We felt it was important to commemorate his lifelong contributions to civic life in Westmount. The award is a way of indicating the esteem he held in the community."

Ted Sancton says journalism was his father's life and he would have been very pleased about the award, even though he himself never went to university. "Whenever young people asked him about breaking into journalism, he would tell them to go out and get a job at a community newspaper, where they would get to experience every aspect of the newspaper production process," Sancton notes. "But later in life, he recognized that times had changed. He came to see that in today's complex world, journalists really do need a formal education."

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Laureen Sweeney

John Sancton shows the ropes to the St. Andrew's Scout Troop, visiting the offices of the *Westmount Examiner* in spring 1981.

"Without a doubt, your generous donation has made a significant difference in my life. Supported by a university committed to the education of all who pass through its doors, blessed with dedicated professors and encouraged by your generosity, I will continue to do the very best that I am capable of."

– Concordia student and scholarship recipient

Good Neighbours

Charity is a win-win situation, say Concordia neighbours John and Martha Bishop

By Debbie Hum

For many years, John Bishop has lived near Concordia's Loyola Campus, and although he has no formal connection to the university, Bishop has long enjoyed its libraries. "It didn't matter if I was an outsider from off the street, the staff gave me excellent library service, which was very convenient for me. I was quite impressed," he says.

In appreciation, Bishop and his wife Martha have made regular contributions to Concordia over the years. In late 2003, as the finishing touches were put on the new Richard J. Renaud Science Complex, they decided to make a substantially larger contribution towards Concordia's building project: a gift of $100,000, mainly from stock gains.

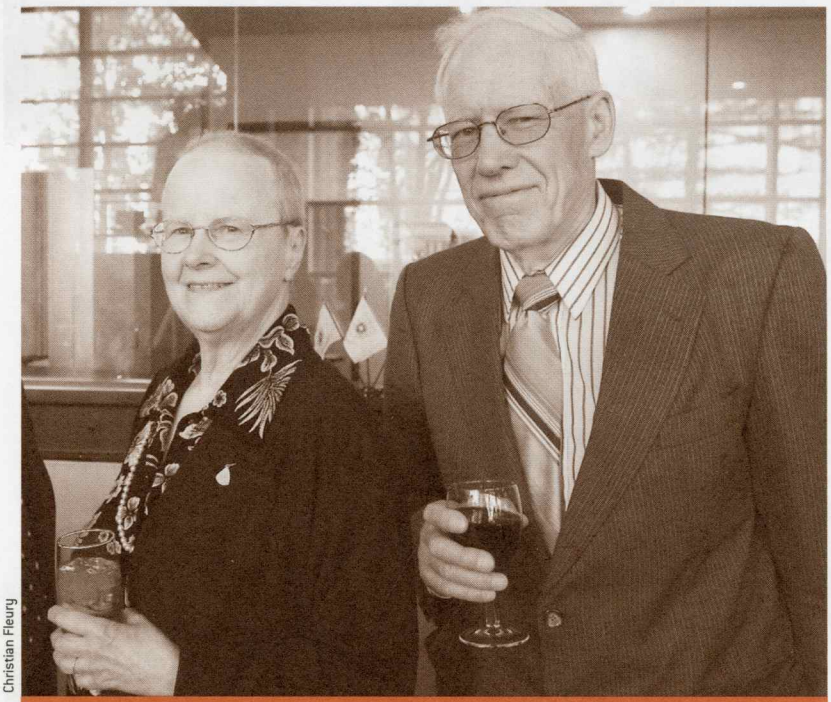
"We have been pleased to make this contribution to the Loyola Campus, which has been a very positive neighbour to our Montreal West home for 46 years," Bishop says.

He attributes the charitable contribution to his early Christian upbringing and a lifetime of hard work, diligent saving and successful investments. Bishop says, "It is a privilege to be able to give something back to our community."

At the same time, he notes that Canadian and Quebec tax laws on capital gains encourage such charitable gifts. "It's a win-win situation," he says. "Of course, you also want to give to a cause you think will be valuable, and we felt that a contribution to Concordia at this time would be a good choice."

While Bishop is a graduate of McGill University, "Concordia helps along the people that most need it," he says. And he notes some personal ties to the university – he fondly recalls being an extracurricular student in an "excellent English course taught by Douglas B. Clarke," one of the builders of Sir George Williams University, and later took a French course there. During this time, Bishop also served as a director and fundraising chair at the International Branch of the YMCA. And in 1984, the Bishops' daughter Anne, one of three children, graduated from Concordia with an honours degree in psychology.

A personal look through the Richard J. Renaud Science Complex after it opened in September 2003 and a second visit for the President's Circle Reception in May 2005 confirmed to the Bishops that they had made a meaningful investment. "It's an amazing building and we are delighted with our part in it," Bishop says.



Christian Fleury

John and Martha Bishop at the President's Circle Dinner, May 30, 2005. "All possible support is welcome now," John Bishop says, while noting that Canadian tax laws encourage charitable giving.

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"This award will definitely help me in pursuing my studies and has certainly eased the financial burden of being a full-time student. I am deeply moved and hope that you will accept my heartfelt gratitude for your generosity."

– Concordia student and scholarship recipient